

## **Carrie Klein**

## **Testimony RE: HB 4341**

Good morning and thank you for this opportunity to address this life and death issue with your committee.

My name is Carrie Klein and this is a picture of my sister, Pam Klein.

I truly wish that I could introduce you to Pam in person, but my **sister, -- who never smoked -- died four years ago from a cancer caused by other peoples' smoking**. She was just 49 years old and she left behind her husband and two 15-year-old boys.

Pam and I were raised in Macomb County. After she graduated from Fraser High School, Pam went on to major in journalism at Central Michigan University.

Her first job in journalism was with the University's newspaper, Central Michigan Life. Later she went on to write for newspapers in Mount Pleasant, Midland, Ann Arbor and Lansing.

It was while working in those Michigan newsrooms that she began inhaling the smoke from other people's cigarettes, cigars and pipes.

And she inhaled more toxic smoke while she did her job as a reporter while attending government meetings, interviewing public officials and CEOs in their offices, and covering stories that took place in restaurants and bars and other public places.

We watched Pam battle her cancer for three years. Pam lost her appetite and grew horribly thin. She developed ugly rashes all over her face and neck, lost all of her hair -- even her eyebrows and eye lashes -- she lost all of her energy and she slowly lost her ability to breathe.

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When she died, she collapsed suddenly in her husband's arms and her boy, Zachary, was there to see it happen.

Since 1985, I have been an assistant prosecuting attorney in Michigan. My career has been devoted to protecting the residents of this state from murderers, child molesters, rapists, con-artists, stalkers and anyone else who seeks to prey upon or exploit innocent people. I am proud to be a member of my local government.

The mission statement of my office reads "Justice, Integrity and Protection". Government has many duties, but **by far the most important must surely be to protect!**

We know more about the dangers of second hand smoke now than we did when Pam worked as a journalist here in Michigan.

We know from the U.S. Surgeon General's report that even a small amount of smoke is harmful.

We know that smoke knows no barriers and ventilation systems in restaurants and bars do not protect the employees who work there or the patrons who eat and drink there.

The Surgeon General stated it best when he said:, "The debate is over. The science is clear. Second hand smoke is a dangerous health hazard that causes premature death and disease in children and non-smoking adults."

Surely the citizens of the State of Michigan **deserve to be protected from this danger.**

If this committee had the power to restore Pam to life, to give me back the big sister that I love and looked up to, then I would surely be here asking you for that gift.

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But, it's too late to do anything except grieve for Pam. She was an innocent victim of second hand smoke, and there have been hundreds of thousands of other similar victims. And while this committee can't restore any of them to their families, **you can help protect other innocent people from becoming the next victims of this killer.**

That's why I'm here today urging you to support House Bill 4341. This isn't a political issue and it isn't an economic issue – it's an issue of life and death.

My sister has already died, but it's not too late save tens of thousands of people in Michigan from having to suffer the way she suffered. It's not too late to save other families from the pain and the loss that my family still feels. It's not too late to save other children, like Zachary, from the horror of watching their parent die.

Thank you for taking the time to listen today.